



VERN DUNHAM

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation • Division of Spill Prevention and Response

Site Description

The Vern Dunham site is located at the former location of Vern's Asphalt Maintenance used oil collection business, approximately 12 miles south of downtown Anchorage, on O'Malley airstrip south of O'Malley Road. Former business owner Vern Dunham collected used oil in nine 10,000 gallon underground storage tanks and used the product for road-oiling purposes. The used-oil collection business began operation in the late 1960's and closed down about 1985. The site is on Anchorage's lower hillside area. The area surrounding the site is residential and drinking water is provided by individual groundwater wells.

Following initial response actions by ADEC to remove oil-stained soils in the late 1980's, the site remained inactive until a 1995 response action.

Public Health and Environmental Concerns

Prior to a 1995 response action, the Department considered the storage of waste oil at the site in underground tanks to be a serious threat to over 100 private drinking water wells within a quarter of a mile of the site. The condition of the tanks was unknown and, therefore the risk posed to soil and groundwater from leaks, overfills, etc, was also not known.

Response Actions

In June 1995, the Department assumed the lead role in responding to risk posed by the hazardous substances stored on site. The response actions included the removal of approximately 50,000 gallons of waste oil and 2,000 gallons of contaminated water from the eight underground storage tanks (the ninth tank was empty) and an inoperative tanker truck. Contaminated soil was excavated and stored on site. There were also 22 drums of hazardous substances and associated

stained soil that were analyzed and removed from the site for proper treatment and/or disposal.

The storage tanks and approximately 200 cubic yards of contaminated soil were removed in April 1998 by a new owner who planned to develop the properties. As a result of the State's response actions, approximately \$150,000 in liens were attached to the property.

Current Status

The major environmental risk posed by the huge volume of used oil has been addressed.

Following the removal of the tanks in 1998, the property owner was unable to account for approximately 200 cubic yards of contaminated soil that was stockpiled on the site. The Department's Storage Tank Program has requested the owner to conduct further site investigation activities to determine whether the contaminated soil was backfilled into an excavation at the site.